

41

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~~EXCPT~~ Additional
DATE 3/12/09
NR 645

Representative Stoker,

Here is the information you requested. Sir if you need more information or something changed please email or call. I have pictures available too. Thanks so much for your help.

John Crowley

Manager, Bitter Root Irrigation District

Attachments:[Stoker.doc](#)

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[application/msword]

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To: Representative Ron Stoker HD 87
From: Bitter Root Irrigation District
Subject: Siphon 1 replacement

Bitter Root Irrigation District (BRID) is a one hundred year old irrigation project. BRID provides irrigation water to 1,375 irrigators on 16,665 acres located on the east side of the Bitterroot Valley. The main canal carries 350 cubic feet second (CFS) and is 71.5 miles long. The main canal beginnings just below Lake Como, about 12 miles southwest of Hamilton, MT and ending at Eagle Watch, about 6 miles northeast of Stevensville, MT.

Built in 1909, Siphon #1 is constructed from riveted steel plates ranging from 3/16" to 5/16" in thickness. The Siphon is 5,654 foot-long which is used to transport almost all of BRID's water. The Preliminary Engineering Report addresses the complete replacement on the siphon. The report determined that failure of any major element could result in loss of water to the acres supplied by BRID as well as damage to the river system, wetlands, aquifer and adjacent U.S highway 93. The report identified the following problems:

- Deterioration and pitting inside the pipe;
- Deterioration of the concrete inlet and outlet structures;
- Structural problems with the river crossing, including the bridge trestle;
- Rivet failures in the pipe;
- Near failure of the expansion joints; and
- Deterioration of support elements of the pipeline, including thrust blocks, turnouts and drains;

The engineers estimate the replacement cost of the steel siphon at \$6,100,000.00.

Any failure of the system would almost surely occur during the summer months when irrigation water was being carried by the project thereby leaving landowners without irrigation water. If the problem were significant it would result in total loss of crops in excess of \$7,000,000.00 and would result in major economic losses for the individuals and the community.

The residents on the east side of the valley are heavily dependent on the irrigation district delivering the water. Without irrigation water, the land served by BRID would become range land and it would be impossible to grow most crops,

There are approximately 12,000 to 20,000 residents that are dependent on the canal resupplying the aquifer of the Bitterroot Valley.

The district is making all efforts to increase tax base to help in any way however, the burden is too excessive for local taxpayers.

Sincerely,

John Crowley
Manager, Bitter Root Irrigation District